

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 are pending in this application. No claims have been canceled or added. Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the cover is formed from a combination of the ionomer and at least one thermoplastic elastomer or diene block copolymer. Support for the amendment is found at page 17, lines 8 to 12 of the specification. Claim 1 has also been amended to recite a range for the hardness difference between the outer core and the inner core. Support for the amendment is found at page 13, last line to page 14, line 1 of the specification. As such, no new matter has been added by the claim amendments.

Rejections under 35 USC 102(b) / 103(a)

The Examiner rejects claims 1-3 under 35 USC §102(b) or in the alternative under §103. Applicants traverse the rejection and respectfully request the withdrawal thereof. The Examiner finds that the claims are anticipated by Nakahara et al. (USP 5,002,281) because Nakahara '281 discloses a golf ball having a two-layer core and a cover having overlapping ranges for diameters and hardness for the inner and outer layers and for the cover. The Examiner also finds that Nakahara '281 discloses similar compositions and preparation of the layers of the golf ball.

Applicants submit that the instant invention is patentable over Nakahara '281. Applicants amend claim 1 to recite that the cover is formed from a combination of the ionomer and at least one

thermoplastic elastomer or diene block copolymer and to recite a range for the hardness difference between the outer core and the inner core.

Applicants submit that Nakahara '281 discloses a golf ball with a cover formed from an ionomer resin. However, Nakahara '281 does not disclose or suggest a cover with a combination of an ionomer resin and a thermoplastic elastomer or diene block copolymer. In addition, Applicants submit that Nakahara '281 does not disclose or suggest the instant hardness range between the outer core and the inner core.

Applicants also submit comparative data supporting the patentability of the instant invention. See, Examples 1-6, particularly Example 3, of Table 8 of the specification, which demonstrates that Example 3 has a superior flight distance and feel. Example 3 is composed of a combination of ionomer resin and at least a thermoplastic elastomer or diene block copolymer as recited in the instant invention. Therefore, it is evident that the instant invention yields superior unexpected results over Nakahara '281.

As Applicants have addressed and overcome all rejections, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and that the claims be allowed.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully

requested to contact Kecia Reynolds (Reg. No. 47,021) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the application by this Amendment.

Pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. § 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicants hereby petition for an extension of two (2) months to October 2, 2001 for the period in which to file a response to the outstanding Office Action. The required fee of \$400.00 is attached hereto.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 

Joseph A. Kolasch, #22,463

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000


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Attachment: Version with Markings to Show Changes Made

(Rev. 09/26/01)

VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 1 as follows:

Claim 1. (Amended) A multi-piece solid golf ball comprising a core consisting of an inner core and an outer core formed on the inner core, and one or more layers of cover covering the core,

wherein the inner core has a diameter of 30 to 39.5 mm and a center hardness in JIS-C hardness of 55 to 70, and is formed from press molded rubber composition comprising polybutadiene, a co-crosslinking agent, an organic peroxide and a filler, and the JIS-C hardness at a distance of 15 mm from the center point of the inner core is higher than the center hardness by 5 to 20,

the outer core has a thickness of 0.3 to 2.0 mm and a surface hardness in JIS-C hardness of 75 to 90, and is formed from press molded rubber composition comprising polybutadiene, a co-crosslinking agent, an organic peroxide and a filler, and the surface hardness of the outer core is higher than the center hardness of the inner core by 15 to 30 [10 to 35], and

the cover is formed from a combination of ionomer resin and at least one of thermoplastic elastomer or diene block copolymer [contains thermoplastic resin as a base resin], and the outmost cover layer has a thickness of 1.5 to 2.5 mm and a surface hardness in Shore D hardness of 64 to 72.